

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MONTANA
MISSOULA DIVISION

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION)
FOUNDATION, INC.,)
a Wisconsin Non-Profit Corporation,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
) Case No. CV 12-19-M-DLC
CHIP WEBER, Flathead National Forest)
Supervisor,)
)
and)
)
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE,)
an Agency of the United States)
Department of Agriculture,)
)
 Defendants,)
)
and)
)
WILLIAM GLIDDEN, RAYMOND)
LEOPOLD, NORMAN DEFOREST,)
EUGENE THOMAS, and the)
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS)
(Kalispell Council No. 1328),)
)
 Intervenor-Defendants.)

DECLARATION OF DOUG BONHAM

I, Doug Bonham, do hereby declare under penalty of perjury as follows:

1. I live in Essex, Montana, approximately 60 miles from Big Mountain. I am a member of the Freedom From Religion Foundation and I am appreciative of the Foundation's challenge to the Jesus statue prominently located on Big Mountain. I agreed to join as a member of FFRF and to be identified with this lawsuit, although I know it is not a popular local position. I am a religious non-believer.

2. Approximately 7 or 8 years ago, I first encountered the Jesus statue on Big Mountain while skiing, and my immediate reaction was that the statue was grossly out of place and an oppressive reminder that Christians are a controlling and favored group in the Flathead Valley. I have not skied or hiked by the statue since, and my aging knees limit me, in any event. Nonetheless, my 15 year old daughter regularly skis on Big Mountain and has exposure to the Jesus statue, which she also considers ridiculously out of place.

3. As a resident of Flathead Valley, I am still affected by the statue on Big Mountain, which literally and figuratively looms over the Valley. I know from residing in Flathead Valley that this is Christian country, and I know from personal experience with local residents that the statue is definitely perceived as a religious symbol – in fact, the statue is proudly perceived as a reminder of the Christian religious values that the majority in the Valley promote.

4. The presence of the Jesus statue on Big Mountain is known to skiers and non-skiers alike in the Valley, and it is perceived as a recognized symbol of the religious majority.

5. Disagreement with or disapproval of the statue of Christ is not a popular or prudent local position. Objection to the statue, therefore, is implicitly, if not explicitly, discouraged.

6. The Jesus statue has an influence throughout the Valley which has the effect of making non-believers, like myself, feel marginalized in the community.

I declare that all statements herein were made with knowledge that willful false statements and the like are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code.

Dated February 6, 2013.


Doug Bonham

FBI/KS-WINNERS/2013-0203 [declaration_doug_bonham_0203] (b)(6)